The Chairman and Members of the Aberayron Rural District Council,

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit to you my Report as Medical Officer of Health for the Llansantffraid District for the year 1895.

During the year there were 112 Births viz: that of 46 females and 66 Males - being at the rate of 23.818 per 1000 population.

There have been 100 deaths - 13 those of infants under one year old, 5 over one and under five years of age, 8 between five and fifteen, 5 between fifteen and twenty five, 26 between twenty five and sixty five, and 43 of persons over sixty five years of age The rate of mortality per 1000 population, in the various parishes into which the District is divided, beginning with the lowest stands as follows: Llanerchaeron 5.75, Rural part of Llanddewi Aberarth 16.31, Cilcennin 16.50, Llansantffraid 17.8.4, Llandysiliogogo Ystrad 18.43, Rural part of Henfynyw 18.66, Llanddarn Fawr 24.62, and Cilcennin 46.23 including deaths from Diphtheria - the death rate per 1000 not including deaths from Diphtheria was 3.44. The rate of mortality for the whole District being 21.310 per 1000 of the population. 13 deaths were due to Phthisis, 20 deaths from Pneumonia, Pleurisy and Bronchitis, 6 from diseases of the heart, 1 from Diarrhea, 50 from various other diseases and old age, 1 from Influenza, and 6 from Diphtheria, one of which took place in Henfynyw Rural, one in Ystrad and 4 in Cilcennin. I made a Special Report of the prevalence of Diphtheria in the parish of Cilcennin and the adjoining one Llanddewi Aberarth, in which I wrote that since the 20th of Oct. 1895 and the end of the year, some 20 cases of Diphtheria have been notified as having occurred in Cilcennin and Llanddewi Aberarth parishes - mostly in the neighbourhood of the village of Cilcennin. The disease first showed itself at Pantrhiw and Bwlchydwr. The first two cases were fatal. Then three other cases occurred at Bwlchydwr, one of which succumbed. The next case showed itself at Blaenarthig - followed by four cases at Clyncam. After a break of three weeks the disease manifested itself at Blaenberllan and Caenanal with one case in each place, followed by its appearance at Brynmaenbach,

and Penfarteg. Then at Toar, and a case was suspected at Aberarth. Three cases occurred at Tirbach one of which proved fatal, one other case took plac at Bryn maenbach. I found on inquiry throughout the neighbourhood that other persons had been suffering from sore throat. Of those houses where diphtheria has shown itself — all without exception are situate in the immediate vicinity of running water, and the surroundings are damp, and in some instances the houses themselves — due in certain cases to the earth outside being on a higher level than the floor of the house. In too many instances the atmosphere was polluted by the accumulating manure and the propinquity of the pigsty. There is reason to believe that persons visiting infected houses have carried the disease to other houses and when an appropriate midus was present the disease manifested itself — hence the necessity of isolation, which was urged on the people. Apart from contagion I am of opinion the disease will start de novo, provided the spores which are omnipresent, have a chance in persons of lowered vitality due to surroundings and conditions such as existed in the places where diphtheria broke out about Llecamin. It may be likened to a match the potentialities of which lie dormant until a combination of circumstances arise, when they manifest themselves at times in a disastrous manner.

During drouth the water supply of many localities runs very short, and in other places the source is of a very doubtful character, as for instances the village pump at Llecamin which is comparatively deep is within a few feet of the churchyard, and is much below some of the burial ground. At present from some cause, the water in the pump last summer was quite offensive. I believe the Parish Council had a proposal laid before it to convey water from a good source for the supply of the hamlet.

I am, Gentlemen
Your obedient Servant
Hugh Williams

Aberayron
Feb. 8th 1896